

Macalester Student Awarded 2013 Pickering Foreign Affairs Fellowship

St. Paul, Minn. – Salman Haji '14, from Albuquerque, N.M., has been awarded a 2013 Thomas R. Pickering Undergraduate Foreign Affairs Fellowship. Supported by the U.S. State Department, this program helps prepare future Foreign Service Officers. Haji is a senior majoring in International Studies.



Salman Haji

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After an intense selection process, the 2013 Pickering Fellows — 20 Undergraduate Fellows and 20 Graduate Fellows — were identified as candidates with some of the skills crucial for members of the United States diplomatic corps: dedication, leadership, planning, cultural adaptability, and strong communication skills.

Last summer, Haji received a U.S. State Department Critical Language Scholarship to study Arabic in Amman, Jordan. He's looking forward to a life in the Foreign Service.

“This fellowship will let me travel the world, meet new people and gain valuable skills to understand more about the world we live in,” said Haji. “At the same time, this opportunity will give me a chance to navigate the Foreign Service with diverse types of perspectives that I have gained as a result of my life experiences. I hope that doing so will improve mutual understanding, cooperation and intercultural awareness between Americans and citizens of other countries.”

Administered for the U.S. Department of State by the Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation, the Thomas R. Pickering Foreign Affairs Fellowships develop a source of men and women whose academic backgrounds fulfill the skill needs of the State Department and who are dedicated to representing America's interests abroad.

Selected in their junior year, Pickering Undergraduate Fellows receive financial support towards tuition and other expenses during the senior year of college and the first year of graduate study. Additionally, Fellows participate in one domestic and one overseas internship. Upon the completion of their master's degree, they commit to three years of service as a Foreign Service Officer for the U.S. Department of State.

Haji would like to serve in the Middle East, North Africa or Central Asia.

The Foreign Service, a corps of working professionals who support the President of the United States and the Secretary of State in advancing the interests of the U.S. abroad, are “front-line” personnel who can be sent anywhere in the world, at any time, in service to the diplomatic needs of the United States.

According to Haji, his time at Macalester will help him in graduate school and while working as a Foreign Service Officer.

“Much of the curriculum from classes at Macalester incorporates topics, ideas, theories, literature and events

that relate to the vast "gray area" between what is considered "right" and "wrong" in politics and foreign policy," said Haji. "I have also become very convinced by the ideas of mutual understanding, intercultural awareness and public diplomacy that Macalester champions. I hope to transfer what I've learned at Macalester into the State Department and improve the image of the United States abroad."

The Thomas R. Pickering Foreign Affairs Fellowship Program is named in honor of one of the most distinguished and capable American diplomats of the latter half of the 20th century. Ambassador Thomas R. Pickering holds the rank of Career Ambassador, the highest rank in the U.S. Foreign Service. He served as Ambassador to Nigeria, El Salvador, Israel, India, and the Russian Federation, finishing his career in the Foreign Service as Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs.

The Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation identifies and develops leaders and institutions to meet the nation's critical challenges. In these areas of challenge, the Foundation awards fellowships to enrich human resources, works to improve public policy, and assists organizations and institutions in enhancing practice.

Macalester College, founded in 1874, is a national liberal arts college with a full-time enrollment of 2,035 students. Macalester is nationally recognized for its long-standing commitment to academic excellence, internationalism, multiculturalism, and civic engagement. Learn more at [macalester.edu](http://www.macalester.edu) (<http://www.macalester.edu/>).

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